

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Initially, the Examiner's attention is drawn to applicant's earlier IDS and Form PTO-1449 wherein two publications have been cited and submitted for consideration. The initialed and returned copy of the Form PTO-1449 has initialed only the second such printed publication (and the cited US patent). The Examiner is respectfully requested to complete the Form by also initialing the Cohen publication and returning a fully initialed copy of such Form PTO-1449.

As requested, the Abstract has been substantially amended so as to bring it into conformance with standard US practice. Similarly, the specification has been reviewed and amended throughout with the same objective.

The Examiner's suggestion for claim 1 has been implemented by the above amendment so as to obviate this ground of claim objection.

In response to the rejection of claims 1, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, claims 1 and 10 have been amended to make it clear that the categorization is based upon extracted identification information. Claim 11 has been cancelled.

Accordingly, all outstanding formal grounds of objection/rejection are now believed to have been overcome.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 10-13 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly anticipated by Paul '709 is respectfully traversed. Similarly, the rejection of the remaining

claims 3, 7-9 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being made “obvious” based on the same single reference to Paul ‘709 is also respectfully traversed.

It is initially noted that the Examiner has liberally relied upon “official notice” to support the rejection of each of claims 3, 7-9 and 14-16. In accordance with standard USPTO practice, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically support each of these grounds of rejection with appropriate documented prior art citations.

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention, e.g., an email assistant, are described from page 38, line 30 to page 49, line 12. Such exemplary embodiments relate to an email assistant which filters incoming emails according to a determined priority.

In particular, the exemplary email assistant extracts data concerning at least one of the following: the destination address(es) of incoming emails; the subject matter of the incoming email as represented by the subject field; and the history data concerning the user’s previous reading of emails from the same sender and the user’s previous sending of emails to that sender. These three inputs can be analyzed by the email assistant in order to determine a priority rating for an incoming email. The priority of the email can then be used to select a message with which to alert the user of the incoming email. For example, high priority messages may have the suggestion of “read mail now” whereas a medium priority message may have a suggestion of “read mail this week”.

The exemplary email assistant monitors responses to emails by a user so that it can recommend an action for future similar emails based on the earlier response. For example, if a

user takes a long time to read an email from a particular sender after receipt, this should indicate that the user considers emails from that particular sender to be of low importance (priority).

Amended claim 1 now specifically requires the means for monitoring user response to measure the time taken for the user to review and/or respond to a communication.

Paul describes a system that automatically identifies unsolicited email messages and controls delivery of these messages to users through the use of “spam probes” to identify sources of unsolicited emails or spam. The system is illustrated in Figure 8, which describes creating a spam probe address (801), which is an email address that is pre-selected to make its way onto as many spammer mailing lists as possible. The spam probe address is then distributed to a number of sites on the communication network 110 that are likely to be browsed by spammers (step 802). Any email addressed to the spam probe address is considered to be unsolicited email or spam, and source data from the received email message can be extracted (step 803). The extracted source data is then transmitted in the form of an alert signal to various network servers (step 804), which can use the extracted source data to update filtering data for filtering spam from received email messages (steps 805-807).

Paul fails to disclose any “means for monitoring user response to the communication” as defined in claim 1. If a spam email in Paul is compared to “the communication” in the present claims, then Paul only teaches monitoring input to the spam probe mailbox and not “user response” to inputs to the spam probe mailbox.

Consequently, Paul also fails to disclose any means for monitoring user response to measure the time taken for the user to review and/or respond to a first communication. As

already discussed, Paul does not disclose monitoring user response and furthermore, does not teach or suggest taking into consideration time (taken) in any context whatsoever. Paul fails to disclose any such features of claim 1.

Paul is based around detecting a spam email and then responding accordingly in contrast to the present invention which monitors responses provided by a user to earlier communications in order to determine a way of handling future communications. Paul and the present invention are not even in analogous arts.

Not only is claim 1 novel over Paul, but there is not teaching or suggestion in Paul that would motivate a skilled person to modify Paul to arrive at the invention of claim 1.

As earlier noted, the Examiner relies almost exclusively upon unsupported “official notice” to reject several dependent claims and documentation to support such “official notice” has been requested above. It is respectfully submitted that the additional features of these dependent claims is not taught or suggested in the prior art – and certainly not when the claim is considered “as a whole” as it must be under 35 U.S.C. §103. Some examples of features which are believed to be unique and novel even by themselves are noted below.

Claim 7 now defines a Bayes net operating in a very specific manner that is neither taught in Paul nor commonly known in the art. Indeed, claim 7 includes references to specific features from claim 1 and the manner in which these features are inter-related by claim 7 are far from commonly known.

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In new claim 22 (similar in this regard to original claim 13), there is defined a step of storing the observed time taken as a function of the extracted identification information. Such a feature, line that of claim 7, is not taught in Paul nor can it be considered common general knowledge.

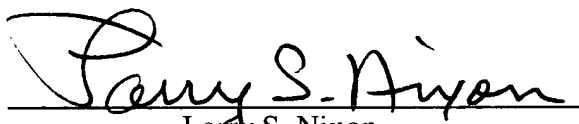
Attention is also directed to new dependent claims 19-26 which are also believed to add further patentable distinction to the claimed subject matter.

Accordingly, this entire application is now believed to be in allowable condition and a formal Notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By:


Larry S. Nixon
Reg. No. 25,640

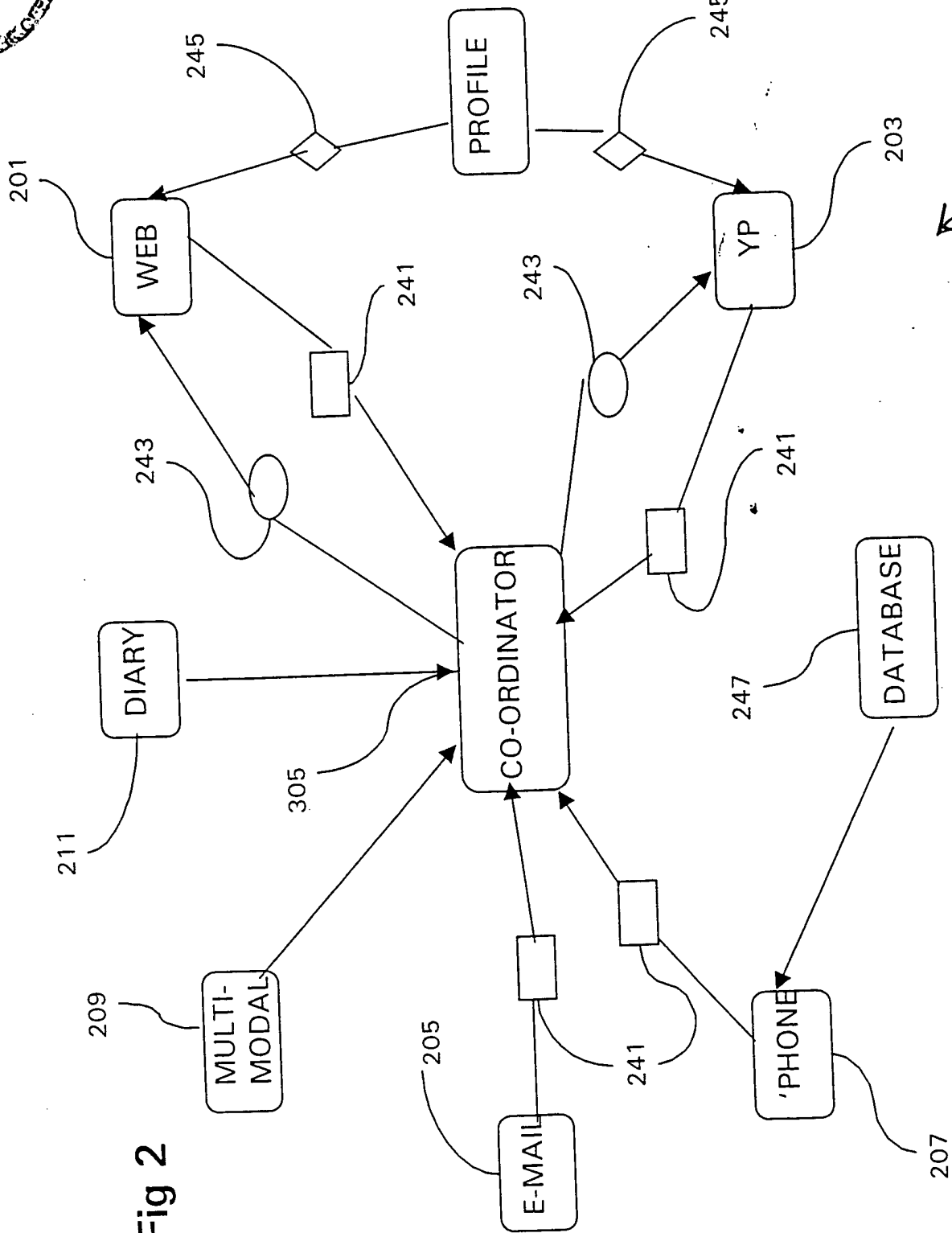
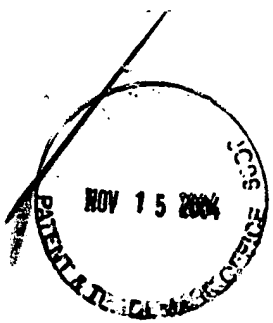
LSN:vc
1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor
Arlington, VA 22201-4714
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Proposed corrections are shown in red on an attached copy of Figure 2. A substitute corrected sheet is also attached.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet(s)
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes



INTELLIGENT ASSISTANT SYSTEM 219

Fig 2